

IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A conveyor system for transportation of articles from a first to a second station, comprising:

(a) a first conveyor having a pair of endless chains each having a series of first grippers mounted thereto in transverse alignment with first grippers on the other endless chain, each transversely aligned pair of first grippers being ~~capable of conjointly gripping~~ an article at two spaced points on one edge thereof in a loading position adjacent the first station, and of releasing the article in a transfer position intermediate the first and the second station;

(b) a second conveyor having an endless chain having a series of second grippers mounted thereto, each second gripper being ~~capable of gripping~~, in the transfer position, an article at a point on the edge thereof intermediate the two spaced points where the article has been gripped by one pair of first grippers on the first conveyor, and of releasing the article at the second station; and

(c) means for driving the first and the second conveyor independently of each other.

2. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 1, wherein the pair of endless chains of the first conveyor diverge apart as they extend from the loading to the transfer position.

3. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 1, further comprising transfer control means capable of permitting or preventing the transfer of the articles from the first to the second conveyor.

4. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 3, wherein the transfer control means comprises:

(a) transfer control cam means associated with the second grippers on the second conveyor and movable between a loading and a nonloading position for causing the second grippers to grip or not to grip the articles at the transfer

position; and

(b) actuator means coupled to the transfer control cam means for causing the same to move between the loading and the nonloading position.

5. (Currently Amended) In a web-fed printing press, a conveyor system to be disposed downstream of a delivery fan for receiving signatures therefrom and transporting the same to the next processing station, the conveyor system comprising:

(a) a first conveyor having a pair of endless chains each having a series of pairs of grip fingers mounted thereto in transverse alignment with like pairs of grip fingers on the other endless chain, each transversely aligned pair of pairs of grip fingers being opened and closed in a loading position downstream of the delivery fan for conjointly gripping a signature at two spaced points on one edge thereof, and of releasing the signature in a transfer position intermediate the delivery fan and the next processing station;

(b) a second conveyor having an endless chain having a series of pairs of grip jaws mounted thereto, each pair of grip jaws being opened and closed in the transfer position for gripping the signature at a point on the edge thereof intermediate the two spaced points where the signature has been gripped by one transversely aligned pair of pairs of grip fingers on the first conveyor, and of releasing the signature at the next processing station; and

(c) means for driving the first and the second conveyor independently of each other.

6. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 5, wherein the pair of endless chains of the first conveyor diverge apart as they extend from the loading to the transfer position.

7. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 5, further comprising transfer control means capable of permitting or preventing the transfer of the signatures from the first to the second conveyor.

8. (Original) A conveyor system as defined in claim 7, wherein the transfer control means comprises:

(a) transfer control cam means associated with the pairs of grip jaws on the second conveyor for causing the same to be opened and closed adjacent the transfer position, the transfer control cam means being movable between a loading position for permitting the second conveyor to be loaded with the signatures in the transfer position, and a nonloading position for preventing the second conveyor from being loaded with the signatures in the transfer position; and

(b) actuator means coupled to the transfer control cam means for causing the same to move between the loading and the nonloading position.

9. (New) A conveyor system as defined in claim 1, wherein, in the transfer position, a gripped portion of the article continuously moves in a rectilinear direction as a respective aligned pair of first grippers releases the article and a respective second gripper grips the article.

10. (New) A conveyor system as defined in claim 5, wherein, in the transfer position, a gripped portion of the signature continuously moves in a rectilinear direction as a respective aligned pair of grip fingers releases the signature and a respective pair of grip jaws grips the signature.